Amendments to the Drawings:

Attached are 2 replacement sheets of drawings containing Figs. 1 and 2. These drawings replace the two originally filed drawing sheets containing Figs. 1 and 2.

Attachment: Replacement Drawing Sheet (2 pages)

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified patent application, as amended herein, is respectfully requested.

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated March 19, 2007. Claims 1-7 are pending in this application. None of the claims are amended herein. Of the claims, only claim 1 is independent.

Specification & Abstract

The specification is amended herein to correct the section headings as requested by the Examiner. The Abstract is also amended herein to conform with 37 C.F.R. 1.72(b) and MPEP 608.01(b). No new matter has been added.

Drawings

Two sheets of replacement drawings containing Figs. 1 and 2 are submitted herewith, as requested by the Examiner, which clearly show the drawing elements and reference numerals. No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

In the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Wilkes (US 5,800,325). It is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is not anticipated or rendered unpatentable by the prior art of record. It is respectfully submitted that the rejection be withdrawn for the following reasons.

The Examiner notes that Wilkes discloses upstream feeding means (drive rollers) 15 and 16, heat seal means (seaming iron, platen) 18 and 19, downstream feeding means (drive rollers) 25 and 26, a cutter (knife) 27 and an accumulator (dancer roller) 24. Furthermore, the Examiner notes that in Wilkes, superposed layers of plastic film are fed intermittently along an upstream feeding path for a length which is N times as much as the size of the plastic bag. The layers of

plastic film are then heat sealed by the heat seal means 18 and 19 whenever being fed intermittently to obtain N times in number of plastic bags. N is an integer equal to or greater than 2. Furthermore, in Wilkes, the layers of plastic film are fed intermittently along a downstream feeding path for a length corresponding to the size of plastic bag and cut by the cutter 27 whenever being fed intermittently. The layers of plastic film are accumulated temporarily by the accumulator 24 and then supplied from the accumulator 24.

However, the downstream feeding means 25 and 26 of Wilkes is different from the downstream feeding means of the invention as discussed below.

According to the invention as defined in claim 1, "the layers of plastic film are fed intermittently along a downstream feeding path for a length corresponding to the size of plastic bag and at a cycle number which is N times as many as the cycle number of the upstream feeding means, after being heat sealed by the heat seal means". The cycle number means what times the layers of plastic film are fed intermittently per minute, as described in the specification at page 6, lines 1 and 2, and N is an integer equal to or greater than 2. In this case, it should be understood that the cycle number must be predetermined before operating the apparatus and in accordance with the length for which the layers of plastic film will be fed intermittently along the upstream feeding path. The layers of plastic film are then fed intermittently along the downstream feeding path at the cycle number which is predetermined. The layers of plastic film are therefore fed intermittently along the downstream feeding path in regular and continuous cycles.

In contrast, Wilkes discloses that the layers of plastic film are fed intermittently along the downstream feeding path in two ways, illustrated in Figs. 1 and 3. In the first way illustrated in Fig. 1, the accumulator 24 moves downward to be detected by a detector 33. The downstream feeding means 25 and 26 is then driven by a motor 28 so that the layers of plastic film can be fed intermittently along the downstream feeding path. In the second way illustrated in Fig. 3, pulses are fed to a counter 136 from photosensitive sensors 20 and 31 when detecting marks 113. The downstream feeding means 25 and 26 is driven by a motor 28 so that the layers of plastic film can be fed intermittently along the downstream feeding path to bring the count of the counter 136

back toward zero. In either case, it is clear that unlike the apparatus of the invention, a cycle number is not predetermined before operating the apparatus, at which the layers of plastic film are fed intermittently along the downstream feeding path.

In addition, as illustrated in Fig. 1 of Wilkes, the motor 28 and the downstream feeding means 25 and 26 are deactivated when the accumulator 24 moves upward to be detected by a detector 32, and restarted when the accumulator 24 moves downward to be detected by the detector 33. It is therefore clear that unlike the apparatus of the invention, the layers of plastic film are fed intermittently along the downstream feeding path not in regular and continuous cycles but in irregular and discontinuous cycles. In this regard, it is necessary to make the layers of plastic film feed at a speed slightly higher than a speed at which the layers of plastic film are fed intermittently along the upstream feeding path, as described in Wilkes at column 5, line 56 to column 6, line 12.

As illustrated in Fig. 3 of Wilkes, it is also clear that the layers of plastic film are fed intermittently along the downstream feeding path in irregular and discontinuous cycles, as in the case of the first way illustrated in Fig. 1. Furthermore, it is necessary to make the layers of plastic film feed at a speed altered by a control system 129, as described in Wilkes at column 6, lines 13 to 30.

Accordingly, the downstream feeding means 25 and 26 disclosed in Wilkes does not correspond to the downstream feeding means of the invention as defined in claim 1. Wilkes is silent about the downstream feeding means by which the layers of plastic film are fed intermittently along a downstream feeding path at a cycle number which is N times as many as the cycle number of the upstream feeding means, N being an integer equal to or greater than 2, as required by claim 1 of the invention.

It is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is not anticipated by the prior art of record. Claims 2, 4 and 5 depend from claim 1 and are therefore not anticipated by the prior art of record. It is respectfully submitted that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

In the Office Action, claims 3, 6 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Wilkes (US 5,800,325). Claims 3, 6 and 7 depend from claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that for the reasons identified above in the discussion of Wilkes, it would not have been obvious to arrive at the invention of claim 1, or the inventions described by claims 3, 6 or 7. It is therefore respectfully requested that claims 3, 6 and 7 be allowed.

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that a full and complete response to the Office Action has been made. The claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any further questions or concerns, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned attorney/agent.

A Petition for Extension of Time and fee payment for two (2) months are being submitted herewith. If overpayment or underpayment has been made, the Director is authorized to charge/credit Deposit Account No. 08-2442 of the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,
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